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Governor O'Malley Declares September 29, 2012 Day of Service in Maryland

July 31st, 2012

Interfaith, regional effort to encourage participation in community service projects to help benefit the environment and end hunger in Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today officially declared September 29, 2012 an interfaith Day of Service, calling on all Marylanders to engage in community service projects focused on ending hunger and protecting the environment. Building on Governor O'Malley's strategic goals of eradicating childhood hunger by 2015, and restoring the health of the Chesapeake Bay by 2025, the activities planned for the day of service will all move the State forward in reaching these goals. The interfaith Day of Service is a regional effort by the states of Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The Day of Service will bring nonprofit organizations and religious groups – churches, youth groups, and religious affiliated schools – to recruit members and supporters to participate in the day of service in their area.



"Throughout the final weekend in September, we'll be coming together as a community – as Marylanders and Virginians, West Virginians and Washingtonians, as members of many great and diverse faiths – to harness the incredible power of community," said Governor O'Malley. "We are asking all our fellow citizens to us join in service the last

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weekend in September – and really throughout the month – in service to combat hunger, in service to protect and restore our environment, and in service that recognizes the connections between the health of our people, and the health of our land, water and air. I appreciate the commitment of Elder Jack Gerard of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in assisting us with our efforts and bringing together our partners in the other states for this very important community service initiative.”

The Day of Service includes partners from the business, nonprofit and faith community. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) will be supplying small tubed trees for groups to plant and will be available at their Clagett Farm site in Upper Marlboro. CBF will also have resources for individual volunteers to work on harvesting crops on the farm that can then be donated to food banks in the area. The Chesapeake Bay Trust will be offering mini-grants of up to \$500 to nonprofits to do tree plantings, other native plantings, or stream clean-ups either on their properties or in their neighborhoods. The Baltimore Community Tool Bank will offer an inventory of tools—shovels, rakes, drills and more to assist nonprofit organizations, religious and educational institutions, community groups and their volunteers in their community projects. Ocean Conservancy International Coastal Cleanup will be available to assist faith-based organizations with identifying streams or rivers in need of organized clean-ups. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources' TREE-Mendous Maryland program allows organizations to have native trees planted in Honor or Memory of family and friends, to celebrate Holidays, birthdays, and to observe other special occasions. TREE-Mendous Maryland will arrange for trees to be planted in Maryland in the county in which the recipient of the certificate lives. Marylanders Plant Trees is another project at DNR that supplies coupons to citizens for \$25 off the purchase of a native tree at 86 participating nurseries across the State.

The O'Malley-Brown Administration has a set of [15 strategic policy goals](#) to improve the quality of life in Maryland. The Administration set the goal of restoring the health of the Chesapeake Bay by 2025. To achieve this goal, the Administration has developed an innovative plan for restoring the Bay, centered on 34 specific and accelerated actions with near term milestones. The Administration has implemented effective policies to restore our Blue Crab population to record highs, used Program Open Space for its intended purpose and protected more than 36,000 acres of open space and invested more in the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund to accelerate our progress. This past session, the Administration continued to pass legislation protecting and improving the health of the Bay including ones that restrict the use of septic systems and enable the State to upgrade our aging waste water treatment plants. Additionally, to address the national problem of childhood hunger, the O'Malley-Brown Administration set the goal and is implementing a plan to become the first state in America to eliminate childhood hunger by 2015. Strategies toward this goal include ensuring that eligible families have access to the Food Supplement Program, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and making sure all eligible children are eating breakfast and lunch in schools. To date, participation in the school breakfast has increased 36 percent from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2010-2011 school year. During the same period, participation in summer meals increased 29 percent. Eighty percent of eligible children received food stamps in 2011 and WIC participation consistently exceeds the USDA assigned caseload.

The Governor's Office is asking our interfaith partners to identify activities that their churches, synagogues or mosques already administer that fit within the two goals of ending childhood hunger and protecting the environment that could use volunteers for the day. County volunteer centers will be asked to help promote the day of service in their county and the Governor's Ethnic Commissions and Commission on Service and Volunteerism will also be asked to play a major role in seeking out opportunities for service, and in spreading the word to engage volunteers in their communities. A

centralized Day to Serve website has been set up – www.daytoserve.org – where all the partners will be identified regionally, and where constituents, community groups, and organizations can sign up to participate and where individuals can locate a community service project in their community.

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